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Security Council

Sixty-fifth year

Provisional

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Friday, 15 October 2010, 10.20 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Rugunda	(Uganda)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Barbalić
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Du Xiaocong
	France	Mr. Araud
	Gabon	Mr. Issoze-Ngondet
	Japan	Mr. Kodama
	Lebanon	Mr. Assaf
	Mexico	Mr. Heller
	Nigeria	Mr. Lolo
	Russian Federation	Mr. Pankin
	Turkey	Mr. Çorman
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. Anderson

Agenda

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2010/512)

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10-58489 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

First report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2010/512)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Ileka (Democratic Republic of the Congo) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Roger Meece, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Meece to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which is contained in document S/2010/512.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Roger Meece. I now give him the floor.

Mr. Meece: I am pleased to brief the Security Council in connection with the first report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) (S/2010/512).

(*spoke in French*)

Since my arrival in Kinshasa about three months ago, I set myself the immediate priority of fostering an ongoing and constructive dialogue with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. However, my settling-in period was interrupted by a sequence of serious events in the east of the country, namely, the mass rapes and attacks in the areas of Kibua and Mpofi, in North Kivu, and a direct assault against a MONUSCO base in Kirumba, also in North Kivu, as well as by the worrying general escalation of violence.

I therefore spent a good part of my first weeks in the eastern part of the country. Nevertheless, I believe that the dialogue with Government officials began on a sound footing, although much work remains to be done. I believe this effort to be crucial, both for the satisfactory execution of our ongoing operations, especially with regard to efforts to protect the civilian population and humanitarian efforts, and for carrying out longer-term goals associated with stabilization and security efforts.

(*spoke in English*)

The horrific attacks in late July and early August in North Kivu clearly underscored the importance of civilian protection and provoked a major internal review of our programmes related to MONUSCO protection activities. The Council has received briefings and updates from Under-Secretary-General Le Roy, Assistant Secretary-General Khare and Special Representative of the Secretary-General Wallström with regard to many of the specific measures and new initiatives we have taken to address deficiencies and to improve our effectiveness in this area. I can assure the Council that this review will not be a one-time activity with a defined time frame.

In the past, the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) pioneered many innovative tactics to increase the Mission's reach and impact. However, we are committed to doing more. The report of the Secretary-General provides details of our ongoing efforts in that regard.

Given the apparently escalating violence in North Kivu of July and August, however, the Force Commander and I also thought it important to establish a more visible and active MONUSCO military posture. In that regard, we planned and launched Operation Shop Window, in the Pinga and Walikale area, from 1 to 18 September, involving roughly 750 MONUSCO troops. Although we kept the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo (FARDC) fully briefed on the Operation, it was a unilateral MONUSCO operation, the first of its kind in a very long time.

Among other goals, it was our intent to check the freedom of operations seemingly enjoyed by armed elements in the area and to generally change the immediate dynamic of violence. The Operation was well received by the FARDC and Government leaders. I believe it accomplished its essential goals, at least for the short term. It is our intent and interest to continue a more active military stance, resources permitting. I consider this to be an essential component of the strategy to improve general security.

I should note that the number of forward MONUSCO bases, which are referred to as company operating bases and temporary operating bases, has greatly multiplied over the past year as we have better identified high-risk zones. We currently have over 90 of those bases, a level which, frankly, is reaching, if not exceeding, our present support capacity. We are now at the point where new bases will have to be balanced by the closure of others. Overall helicopter-lift capability is a critical factor in that calculation, as are budgetary limits.

I must be frank, however, to underscore that all of those MONUSCO activities cannot serve as the complete answer to the security problems of the east. The scale of the problem is enormous.

The best data available, for example, suggests that over 15,000 rapes were committed last year in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Armed groups operate in many widely dispersed areas, not only in proximity to villages and towns but indeed often intermixed with the civilian population. In that vast area — larger than Afghanistan — it is not possible for MONUSCO to ensure full protection for all civilians. To approach that goal would require vastly greater force levels and resources. In that context, Government security forces of course have the primary responsibility to ensure security for the people of the Congo.

I must also note, however, that even good short-term military operations alone will not be sufficient to ensure long-term security. The fundamental threat posed by armed groups requires a broader strategy, also requiring our continued focus. Such a strategy must include military pressure but must also go well beyond to a daunting array of issues.

Our operational collaboration with the FARDC is predicated on the basis of conditionality, intended to ensure that support to FARDC operations is consistent with human rights principles. However, many aspects of our collaboration have been increasingly viewed by FARDC commanders as an obstacle to be avoided, which has led to an increase in FARDC unilateral operations without MONUSCO involvement or support. In that regard, I have been seeking to shift the nature of our conversation, basically to one of opportunity rather than problems.

Another major issue has been the lack of support to holding battalions to prevent the return of negative forces to cleared areas. That has long been a problem area, and we are addressing it. By implementing such support, subject to conditionality, we reinforce our human rights efforts, potentially significantly increasing military effectiveness in targeting armed groups while also improving the overall relationship with the FARDC.

The general discussion of the future strategy in the Democratic Republic of the Congo includes a central focus on security sector reform, which covers a vast range of activities from training and operations of the military to military and civilian justice systems and police training and reform. MONUSCO is involved in many of those areas, together with other international partners. Indeed, just two weeks ago, MONUSCO launched a six-month training programme for 500 recently integrated Congolese national police, with support from the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

That is a small part of the needed effort, however. We have been requested by the Congolese Government to expand the training programmes very significantly, and we wish to do so. That will require significantly increased resources from donors as well as from the United Nations, and we welcome all expressions of support. Significantly, one key element will be providing equipment to trained police personnel and units, an authority that the Council has not granted to MONUSCO.

As I have noted, justice systems also remain a very important area in facilitating progress and long-term stability. A key objective here is ending any culture of impunity. In that regard, I am pleased to note the successful efforts by MONUSCO forces, in cooperation with the military prosecutor's office in North Kivu, to arrest "Lieutenant Colonel" Mayele, a major commander implicated in the incidence of mass rapes of late July and early August. I also applaud the arrest of Callixte Mbarushimana in Europe under a warrant of the International Criminal Court. These are encouraging steps forward, but they also underscore the continuing need for the strengthening of both military and civilian justice systems.

I have been engaged in early discussions with both Congolese leaders and international community partners as to how to improve our overall dialogue regarding those vitally important areas of needed security sector improvements. I am convinced that it is feasible to substantially improve the ongoing process of consultations in all those sectors — I hope with a focus on concrete programmes. This area, however, as is the case with many other issues, will require sustained engagement from the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its international partners over a substantial period of time.

There are other related areas that must be addressed to establish long-term stability in the east and throughout the country. Among them is the issue of the illegal exploitation of mineral resources, a major area of concern. There are no easy or quick answers. But simultaneous efforts are required on a number of fronts, from, among many other things, bolstering domestic Congolese capabilities to international efforts to establish an acceptable regulatory framework for the mineral trade.

As I look to the future of MONUSCO and the region, I must of course make reference to the new procedures to effect a joint evaluation with Congolese authorities of security conditions. I am pleased to say that the process has gone well. Differences over specifics have been discussed and resolved, and the process itself has been useful in providing an ongoing institutional mechanism for collaboration. I have had an ongoing open discussion with Congolese officials on the subject. I can say that the initial assessment cycle does not indicate a need for any significant adjustments to the MONUSCO deployments or focus.

I must also mention a new and very important priority for the Congolese Government and for us, and that is the conduct of national elections scheduled for November 2011. President Kabila and other Government leaders have made it very clear that the conduct of democratic, transparent and credible elections is a major priority. A good deal of concrete progress has been made. Budgets have been approved by national and international authorities; initial planning for needed logistics support by MONUSCO has been completed, and there are ongoing operations for voter registration and other early preparatory steps.

The United Nations Development Programme is also fully committed to playing its necessary role in providing technical and other assistance. Further work will be needed in future for the conduct of the subsequent local elections planned, now targeted for 2013. It is worth noting that the share of the 2011 election budget to be supported by the Congolese Government is considerably larger than its share during the first round of democratic elections, in 2006.

I would also note that I have been greatly encouraged by the improvement in regional relations. These are of critical importance to the future stability of the region, and of course there is currently a particular focus on how to deal with the major threat posed by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in several countries. That is an ongoing priority, and in fact the latest meeting at the ministerial level has just taken place in Bangui under the general auspices of the African Union, a meeting in which we participated. I can assure the Council of our readiness and willingness to continue to support such regional efforts.

In presenting these observations, I do not in any way wish to minimize the extent and scope of the challenges ahead. They are daunting. I have always believed, however, that they can be met and resolved with sufficient will and commitment on the part of the

Congolese Government and population, and by sufficient support from the international community.

On behalf of MONUSCO, I can firmly state that we want to do our part, in terms of stepped-up military activities, enhanced civilian protection and stabilization programmes, and activities to address short- and long-term needs. However, we require the resources and the political support needed to carry out that mission fully. We will be frankly laying out what we view as key budget requirements, and we are ready to use them with the highest degree of effectiveness possible.

As long as armed groups are still active, peacekeeping activities will have to go hand in hand with peacebuilding activities and with support for socio-economic recovery. I hope that together with the Government and bilateral partners, the needed support will be available for all the areas of the Democratic Republic where peace has been restored, but where people wait for a peace dividend.

(*spoke in French*)

Having been afforded the honour of appearing before the Council for the first time as Special Representative of the Secretary-General, I would be remiss if I concluded my statement without paying tribute to the achievements of my predecessors, who have assisted the Democratic Republic of the Congo throughout a peace process that has been both long and difficult and who were able on numerous occasions to guide MONUC so skilfully through the various crises that have marked its existence. I remain greatly impressed by the commitment and dedication of MONUC staff, as well as the staff of MONUSCO and the other United Nations agencies, and the enormous work they have accomplished. I myself witnessed the scale of MONUC's contribution, as well as that of the specialized agencies, to the peace process, the conduct of elections and the overall objective of forging peace and security in the region. Council resolution 1925 (2010), which changed the name of the Mission to MONUSCO, is yet another step accomplished within the framework of its transition to a peacebuilding mission. In my view, it forms a solid basis for our work.

(*spoke in English*)

I have no illusions as to the difficulty of the road ahead. The problems are great in scope and complexity. I remain fundamentally optimistic, however, that with sufficient will and resources, progress can and must be achieved. It is important to pursue that path.

The President: I thank Mr. Meece for his briefing.

There are no further speakers on my list. In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.35 a.m.